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DATE: 11/6/57  
REVIEWER: 60/160

7 September 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Contemporary Trends in Fascism and Kindred  
Rightist Totalitarian Movements

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1. Following my discussion with [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] has considered the possible need for a comprehensive study of current trends and movements of a rightist totalitarian nature to which we will refer, for convenience, under the general name of "Fascist."

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2. Our conclusion is that, while in eclipse since the end of World War II, rightist totalitarian movements have continued their existence with major nuclei in Sweden, Germany, Italy and Spain, with centers of operation or propaganda in most countries of the world including the US, and with international contacts and influence, although lacking any dominant over-all organization.

3. The contemporary Fascist movement possesses considerable vitality and its exponents work both in the theoretical and practical realm. The most active and presumably the most capable protagonists in the international field at present are former Nazis operating in Europe, the Middle East and South America. They have connections with and support from Italian and Spanish groups and remnants of former elements in the international Fascist complex such as the Croatian Ustashi and the Romanian Iron Guard. Per Engdahl leads the Swedish group and Sir Oswald Mosley continues at the head of the small but persistent British group.

4. The most striking general characteristics of the contemporary Fascist movement are its persistence and the continuing ability of its leaders to obtain financial backing from certain industrialists, arch-conservative aristocrats, members of governments, and other unknown sources. Their mass following currently is negligible and they do not appear to need one for the present.

5. The protagonists of contemporary Fascism identify themselves with nationalist movements, and in the areas where aggressive nationalism opposes US policies and interests their action appears to be a factor of considerable importance. As counselors, agitators, and propagandists they have been leaders of anti-US sentiment in Argentina and Egypt from 1946 to the present.

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6. These same protagonists have strengthened nationalist movements opposing US influence by obtaining technical personnel— not necessarily from their own ranks—qualified to develop or begin the development of national industries and military equipment so as to reduce or give promise of reducing dependence on the US in areas deficient in technical and industrial capacity such as Argentina and the Middle East.

7. Contemporary Fascists, nationalists and Communists follow parallel anti-US propaganda lines. There is evidence of direct and witting collaboration between certain Fascist groups and agents of the USSR. As the Fascists are currently discredited in world public opinion, they embrace opportunity where they can find it and have no reluctance to enter clandestine arrangements. The basic ideological affinity between Fascism and Communism, however, is such that it can be exploited as easily as the ideological distinctions between them, by those disposed to find an excuse for collaboration.

8. We will ask the CIA Library to prepare a bibliography of literature on the subject, and also check with the State Department. We then can begin the collation and analysis of intelligence files dealing with this subject. The purpose of a study on this subject would be to present the current situation of Fascism and evidence of its potential, particularly with relation to possible collaboration between "neo-Fascists" and Communists or between "neo-Fascists" and nationalists in ways inimical to US interests, ~~as the case of Germany~~

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~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ We believe that this study might profitably begin with an analysis of the contemporary Fascist movement in relation to the current situation in ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ and the Middle East. If the findings then warrant, the study can be expanded to cover other areas.

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